



# PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL BEING: TEACHERS NEED TO ENHANCE IN TEACHING

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## ABSTRACT

Psychological well being is becoming growing concern in recent studies of various field specially in teaching. This paper attempts to explain about promotion of awareness of psychological well being in beginning teachers as well as in-service teachers for their optimal functioning in teaching. The psychological well being is very important in teaching profession as it talks about realization human strengths and potentials which is necessary in innovations and creativity in any profession. Psychological well being is significant aspect of well being as it focuses on purposeful goals and meaning of life which is an ultimate aim of teaching. This paper also explains relationship between psychological well being and self determination theory which involves human motivation, very useful for effective teaching. In the end author suggests to facilitate psychological well being of teachers in teacher education programs.

**KEYWORDS:** Eudaimonic approach, Psychological well-being, Self Determination Theory, Teachers.

## Introduction

*"Just as the good life is something beyond the pleasant life, the meaningful life is beyond the good life."* - Martin Seligman

Well being is important for all people to flourish in their lives. Well being equals to happiness, purposeful living, growth of a person etc. It is that dynamic state in which a person is able to develop his/her potential, produce work effectively and creatively, having strong and positive relations with others, which in turn contributes to society. It is very important aspect in humans as it is most desirable state in humans. People with good well being, do better, and, having a more desirable life. Ryan and Deci (2001) advocate well being defines by society has effect on teaching, government, therapy, parenting, as all these endeavors aim to change in people's life for better. Well-being is associated with how and why people experience their lives in more positive ways including cognitive functioning, decision making and judgment, effective performances and affective reactions. World Health Organization (World Health Organisation, 1952) defines well being as "a state of complete physical mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." Bradburn (1969) expressed that well being is related to people's feeling about their daily lives.

Now well being concepts is growing concern for research in new field of psychology that is positive psychology for studying happiness, healthy well being and how to foster them (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). They defined positive psychology as study of positive functioning which aims to help individual and group to flourish. The present study represents a view about how psychological well being is helpful for teachers in producing positive outcomes in teaching learning process.

## Hedonic (Subjective well being SWB) and Eudaimonic Well-Being (Psychological well being PWB)

In positive psychology well-being includes two approaches one is hedonic other is eudaimonic approach. In first approach, the main focus is on happiness which means presence of positive affect and absence of negative affect (Kahneman et al., 1999) or high degree of one's life satisfaction. A most significant work of leading psychologist Diener (1984) explored the term Subjective Well Being (SWB). From this perspective, well being is considered as subjective because the idea is for persons evaluate for themselves what they experience of wellness. As subjective well being is only related to happiness which is not sufficient to perform effectively in life. A new concept of well being is introduced which is more than happiness that is eudaimonia. This paper is concerned with Eudaimonia or Psychological well being.

## Eudaimonic view of well being

This approach is generally concerned with living a complete human life, realization of one's potential. This perspective of well being derives from Aristotle's Philosophy of happiness that is Nicomachian Ethics in which well being involves "living well and doing well". According to him human happiness centers on good life that represent human excellence and fully functioning. It is true in order to lead truly one has to function effectively and perform well. Aristotle argued that realization of human potential is the ultimate goal of human life. This approach is directly related to human efforts which is necessary to perform effectively and positive outcomes.

## What is Psychological well being?

In current years there is addition of a new form well being to subjective well

being has neeb emerged from the work of great positive psychologists Deci and Ryan (Ryan & Deci, 2000,2001) and Ryff (1989). This perspective of psychological well being is based on humanistic theories of positive functioning. According to Ryff psychological well being is concerned with lives going well. It is the combined form of feeling good and functioning purposefully and effectively. Her psychological well being is multi facet model. Ryff model of psychological well being includes six dimensions i.e personal growth, self acceptance, environmental mastery, positive relation with others, autonomy and purpose in life.

Six dimensions Ryff's (1989) model of psychological well being:

- *Self Acceptance*- feature of self actualization; important for mental health; optimal functioning, having positive attitude toward the self.
- *Positive relations with others*- warm, close, well established relation with others; concern for others' welfare; capable of strong intimacy and empathy.
- *Autonomy*- feeling of independency, self determined, manages behavior from within.
- *Personal growth*- engages in growth oriented process, feeling of developing and expanding self.
- *Environmental mastery*- having competence and mastery over all situations; involves in making surrounding effectively.
- *Purpose in Life*- directs toward purpose in life; believes in making efforts for achieving goals; focuses on aims and objective.

These dimensions of psychological well being are originated from extensive theoretical literature (Ryff and Singer, 1996). These works includes Maslow's concept of self actualization; Jung's conception of individualization; Roger's conception of fully functioning person; Allport's conception of maturity; Erikson's stage model; Buhler's basic life tendencies for fulfillment of life; Frankl's conception of meaning of life; Neugarten's conception of personality change; Jahoda's feature of positive mental health.

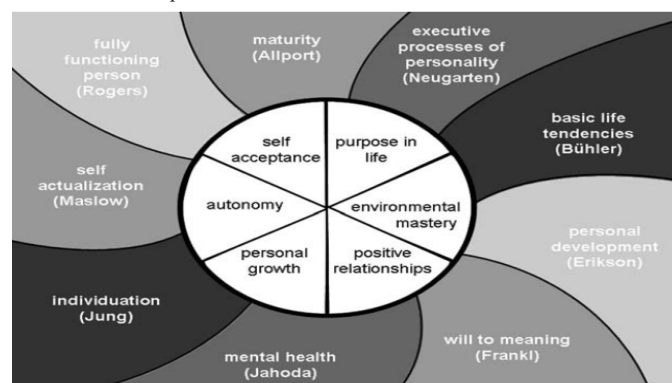


Fig. 1. Core dimensions of Psychological Well Being and their theoretical foundations Ryff & Singer (2006)

The idea of feeling good involves not only positive aspects of emotions and satisfaction in life but also some more emotions like affection, interest, motivation, care and confidence. While the concept of functioning effectively incorporates the development of one's potential, having meaning of life and sense of purpose towards goal of life, having self control, self management, self determination and last but not least experiencing positive relationships.

The theorists argue that psychological well being is different from subjective feelings as subjective one is related to one's evaluations of their lives but psychological well being represents optimal human functioning.

### Self Determination Theory (SDT) and Psychological Well Being

This Self Determination Theory primarily developed for explaining human motivation, optimal functioning and personality by Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan. As we all know positive psychology concerns with positive emotions and ways to develop and boost up individual's strengths and potentials, SDT is helpful in contributing in abundant amount of work in positive psychology. The main emphasis of this theory is on self determined behavior and socio-cultural situations that promote it. It enforces growth-oriented process. It assumes human being are active organism who are directed by three human's basic or psychological needs (Deci & Ryan, 1985)

The Self Determination Theory consists of three psychological needs that is autonomy, competence and relatedness. This theory suggests that fulfillment of these needs is necessary to healthy human functioning for growth and constructive social development as well as personal psychological well being (Ryan and Deci, 2000).

- **Autonomy** refers to belief, we hold that control our behavior and have options or choices to undertake activities.
- **Competence** mentions will to control and master the situation and outcomes.
- **Relatedness** refers to close connection or interaction with others and to be cared for others.

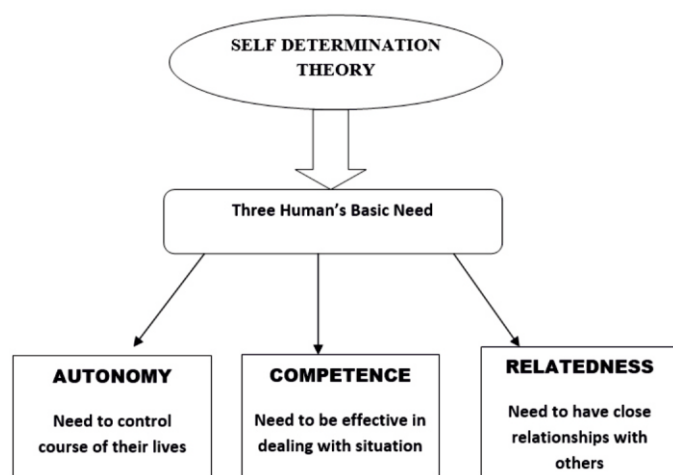


Fig.2. Self Determination Theory and Three Human's Basic Needs

It is further argued that when these needs are fulfilled, a person experiences greater wellbeing and motivation. For example if a teacher feels autonomous, competent and related or connected to work in classroom, he/ she is more likely to have healthy wellbeing and motivated towards his/her work which essential for effective teaching (Collie et al., 2014).

### Teachers' Psychological Well Being and Motivation for Successful Teaching

Motivation is defined as reason or purpose for acting or behaving in desired manner. It is that psychological driving force that reinforces a person to act for achieving desired goal. It is necessary driving force to perform effectively and purposefully. It is true that teachers' well being plays pivot role in motivation and optimal and effective functioning in the classroom. According to Asemah (2010), teacher's motivation is a term that include needs, desires, interest, forces, and drives initiated for teachers in order to instigate them to behave in desirable academically manner. Teacher motivation is basically related to teacher's attitude to work which include teacher's desire to participate in teaching learning process within school environment. Teacher's motivation also incorporates teacher's interest in classroom discipline and classroom control in proper way. In this way teacher's motivation underlies involvement or non involvement in scholastic and non scholastic activities in school settings.

Motivation in teacher influences teacher to teach and to transfer knowledge to students effectively. Oko (2014) argued that teacher's motivation also impacts on student academic performances as teacher desires to teach his learners well, this

results student to encourage learning more and achieving better grades in class, emerging out their potentials which in turn develops self concept and enhances self confidence. He further said that teacher motivation energizes, directs and sustains teacher-student efforts.

For behaving well and perform best in classroom teacher's psychological well being needs to be good which is also important for motivation and optimal functioning of teachers in classroom. It is also discussed earlier in self determination theory that the three internal or psychological (autonomy, competence and relatedness) needs put impact on motivation.

Psychological well being is based on self determination theory in which person with healthy psychological well being is characterized with four motivational concepts (Ryan et al. 2008).

- seeking intrinsic goals and give priority for their personal growth, community and relationships.
- acting in independent, autonomous or volitional ways.
- being mindful and behaving with a sense of awareness.
- acting in ways to satisfy all psychological needs.

They further said that people with high psychological well being tend to act in more prosocial ways and contribute towards strengthening of society and community for example teachers with good psychological well being contribute for strengthening of nation. In fact, psychological well being is associated with several positive outcomes. Firstly, hedonistic aspects or subjective well being which is essential for satisfaction in life which possesses high positive affect for every individual. For example if a teacher feels good, he/she may satisfy with their teaching job and pay attention toward their duties in classroom as well as in school. Secondly, eudaimonic aspect which also contributes to positive affects. Ryff and Singer (1989) suggests six dimensions (personal growth, self acceptance, environmental mastery, purpose in life, positive relations and autonomy) which is outcomes of a well lived life. If a teacher opts this multidimensional approach he/she would better understand his/her potentials in teaching learning process, develop self, having confidence in their act which is essential for any profession; set meaning and purpose of life (Ryff & Keyes, 1995) which focuses on what is the mission of teaching and how to achieve teaching goal which has long term significance like higher life satisfaction, self esteem and coping and resilience dealing with all situations good as well as worst which in turn facilitate mental health etc; positive and meaningful relationships influences both aspects of well being that is reduction of impact of negative experiences and help to create meaningful and positive life experiences which helps teachers to motivate in school engagements (Furrer and Skinner, 2003).

### Conclusion

For growth of any nation education is very important factor and educating the younger generation for becoming a responsible citizen is the primary responsibility of teachers. So in all conditions teacher should be more effective, motivated and having healthy well being. They should be well trained in all manners. The current study deals with importance of psychological well being for teachers which is associated with optimal functioning by realization of one's strength and self as every individual, society and nation need to flourish through focus on well being rather than disorder or dysfunction (Huppert, 2009). Good psychological well being is essential for teachers because it includes self growth of teacher, emphasizes on teacher's sense of direction and meaning or purpose of life by achieving teaching goals, makes teacher confident by autonomous or self determined behavior, help teachers to gain mastery over all situation in school settings which significant aspect of good mental health and make teachers and students bonding strong. With all these qualities teacher can grow and flourish in their profession. According to Self Determination Theory psychological well being also can maintained by achievement of three psychological needs. The self determination theory has tremendous impact on teaching as it enhances learning and academic outcomes. SDT differentiates between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations where intrinsic motivation is self determined and is associated with better performance, deep leaning and positive well being which is achieved after satisfaction of three basic needs autonomy, competence and relatedness. If a teacher has good psychological well being, he/she can contribute most creative, innovative and intelligent inputs in classroom for the betterment of students. Researches shows relationship between psychological well being and quality of school work life (Ilgan et al., 2015). Therefore, there is need to foster psychological well being and nurturance of begging teachers as well as working teachers so that they function effectively to make a better nation.

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